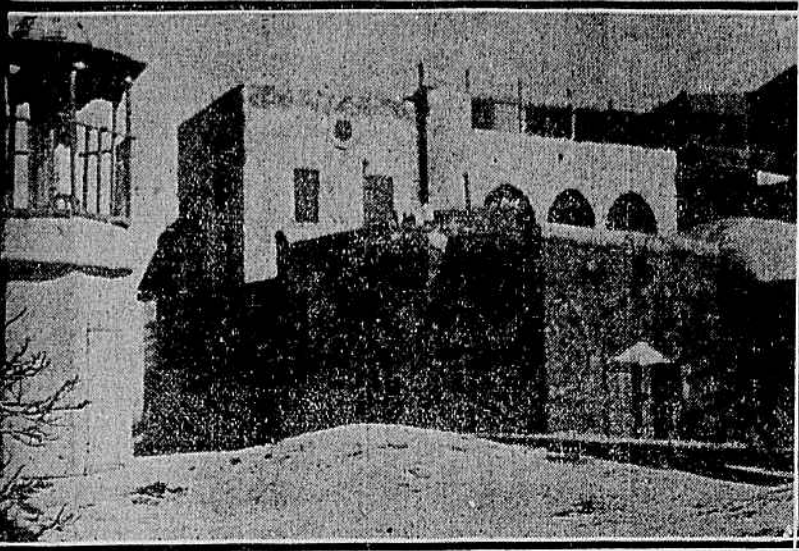


# From Dan to Beersheba---Graphic Descriptions of Palestine---In the Footsteps of Jonah---Where Solomon's Timber Was Landed



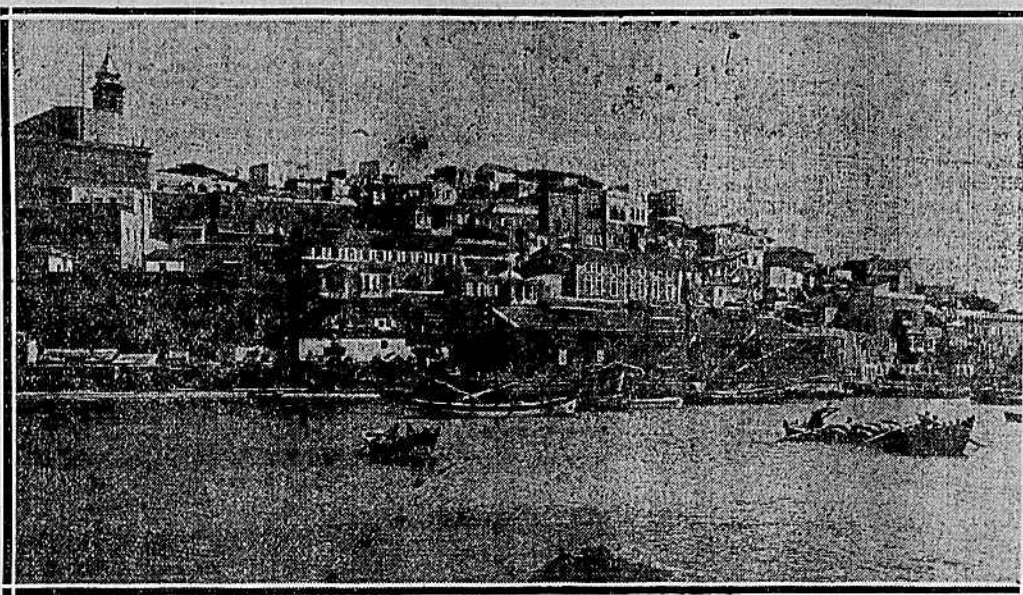
VIEW OF SIMON THE TANNER.

FRANK G. CARPENTER, painter.

Jaffa. This letter I begin the story of my travels in the Holy Land, during which time I shall visit the most interesting spots in a very few hours, and with pen and paper shall show you the land Lord as it looks in this good old place.

First place, let me give you a view of the country. Palestine is not large. With one of Mr. X's aeroplanes we could fly over the whole of it in a very few hours. It is crossed by railways, a fast train would carry us from one side to the other in about fifty minutes. Syria, which takes in the hills of Lebanon and much other territory, is not as long as from New York to Pittsburgh, and its average width is less than fifty miles. It is the boundary of Asia Minor, on the north, and extends from there southward along the line of the Mediterranean Sea until it is lost in the Arabian Desert. The Holy Land itself, that is, the land of Israel, is but a small strip of land, and if you take it up and stretch it over the States, it would hardly be a patch of corn plaster on Uncle Sam's back. Dropped down upon New York, with one end at Boston, the other would be at Mount Washington, and most of the country would not be seen from Boston to Springfield. If spread out upon Northern California, the whole might be included in a line drawn from Chicago to San Francisco, and thence to Decatur and Chicago.

Land of Milk and Honey. The Bible has called this little territory a land of milk and honey. The mission must have come by contact with the deary and the Shui, through which the Israelites came on their way to it. As I know from former travels, it is more fertile than any part of the Alleghenies, the Blue Ridge of Virginia, which is covered with stones, is the Mississippi Valley compared with it. The Holy Land has a backbone of mountains



LANDING AT JAFFA.

comprising the hills of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, with a low coastal plain, where the Philistines lived, running between it and the Mediterranean Sea. On the other side of the backbone is the great ditch in which the Sea of Tiberias and the Dead Sea lie, with the Jordan running from one to the other. This ditch is below the level of the sea, and parts of it have the hottest and most oppressive climate on earth. On the opposite side of the Jordan toward the east is a country much richer than Palestine. It is composed of highlands from 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level, giving excellent pasture and, in the north, large crops of wheat. This was the

Bashan, Gilead and Moab of the Bible, and it is now inhabited chiefly by Mohammedan Bedouins, who live in tents, driving their camels, cattle and sheep from place to place. In the past it was thickly populated, and its ruined cities are now being excavated. From Egypt to Palestine I came here from Egypt. I took the express train at Cairo and in four hours was landed at Port Said, at the mouth of the Suez Canal, where I got a steamer which brought me to Jaffa. The whole way was through the lands of the Bible. The depot from which we started lies not far from the spot where the guides say the baby Moses lay in the bulrushes, and the railroad runs over the old caravan route down which Jacob and his sons came into Egypt for corn and over which Joseph and Mary must have brought the infant Jesus when they fled to escape King Herod, the baby killer. We struck the canal at Ismailia, about midway of the isthmus of the Suez, and thence rode northward along its banks to Port Said.

Our steamer was crowded with pilgrims from Russia, Egypt and North Africa. There were many Americans, French and Germans traveling in glass, and hundreds of Syrians and Egyptians going to the Holy Land. We left at 5 o'clock in the evening, and our first view of the Holy Land came at 7 o'clock the next morning. We had been awakened at 6 with the cry that we were nearing shore, but this was a ruse of the captain to get breakfast out of the way before landing. When I first came up on deck nothing but the sea was in sight. The sun was about two hours high and the sky a light blue with long, thin, white clouds drawn like a half-veil over it, fitted down into the ocean at the eastern horizon. At 10 o'clock saw two lines of hazy gray rise up as it were out of the water, which rippled in sapphire wavelets, caught by the sun. The first line was the sandy beach that edges the rich plains of Sharon, and the second the wall of smoky gray, which marks the hills of Judea or the highlands of Palestine. Coming nearer these lines increased in size, and the first turned to dazzling white sand, out of which a little later the wooded ridge of Palestine rose. Jaffa came into view. Nearer still we could see the shipping in the harbor, and above and below the walls of Jaffa, one of the oldest towns in the world.

In the Footsteps of Jonah. We get some of the age of Jaffa from the story of Jonah, for the Bible says that it was from here Jonah took passage upon the ship from which he was thrown overboard into the mouth of the whale. He remained in the whale's belly three days, during which time he prayed to the Lord, and the Lord spoke to the whale, whereupon he was vomited out upon dry land. Jonah was born about 850 years before Christ. He was a baby when Homer was telling the story of the Iliad, and a hundred years had yet to elapse before the founding of Rome. I am not sure as to the exact spot where Jonah was taken up by the sailors and thrown into the sea, but he is said to have been buried not far from Jerusalem, and there are dragons in Palestine who will show you his tomb.

Ever since Jonah's time sailors have held a superstition against having preachers on board, thinking that such passengers bring bad luck to the ship. However that may be, the harbor of Jaffa is one of the worst in the world. It is almost always rough, and when it is impossible to land. Upon our arrival the sea was quiet, but nevertheless, the swell was such that the boats which took us ashore bobbed up and down and the waves soaked our baggage before reaching port. As to Jonah's hitting and being hurled, one of our preachers on board has quoted a new version for the reason of his leaving the whale:

"I threw up Jonah," said the whale, "Who'd lately come to town; I threw up Jonah. For I could not keep a good man down."

In coming in I looked about for a whale. There was none in sight, although I am told they are still to be seen in the Mediterranean. In that place, however, were many jellyfish, of an opalescent blue. These fish were as big as a football, and of the shape of a mushroom. There were hundreds of them floating about, and they bumped again and again against the hull as we lay there at anchor.

Solomon's Timber Rafts. In addition to the story of Jonah, there are many other well authenticated facts about Jaffa which make it interesting. It has always been the chief port for the Holy Land. It was at one time owned by the Phoenicians, and later, when Solomon built the temple, it was here that the timber used in its construction was landed.

The most of this was cedar, which came from the forests of Lebanon, several hundred miles up the coast. The logs were dragged down the mountains and thrown into the sea at Tyre and Sidon. They were there made into rafts and towed to Jaffa, whence they were carried up to Jerusalem by camels and men.

Jaffa was an important port in the days of the crusades, and was fought for again and again. At one time its walls were overthrown by Saladin, and a little later they were rebuilt by Richard, the Lion-Hearted, who came here in a vain attempt to rescue the holy sepulchre from the hands of the Turks. In addition to all this, there is a tradition that Andromeda, the beautiful daughter of the king of this country, was here chained to the rocks in order that she might appease a huge sea serpent, which threatened to eat up the people. While so, impelled she was rescued by Perseus, who killed the monster and married her. In Pliny's time the historians state that the chains by which Andromeda was bound to the rocks were still to be seen, and that the bones of the sea serpent were carried to Rome and placed upon exhibition there.

Jaffa in 1910. The Jaffa of to-day stands upon a rocky bluff washed by the Mediterranean Sea. The city is built right on the rocks and its yellow, white and blue houses come down to the water's edge. They rise up the steep sides of the bluff, making a wall which cuts off the view of the country behind. At the south of the bluff, as far as one can see, are white sands. At the



I was taken through Jaffa by a Syrian named Moses.

north are orange groves and then more sand.

As we left the ship we came down a gangway and were lifted into the boats. The third-class and steerage passengers were hung over the sides of the deck of the steamer by the arms and dropped down into the boats, which are twelve or more feet below. Some of them screamed as they fell, making the rocks re-echo with their cries as though the beautiful Andromeda were still chained there. We had no trouble with the customs, for I believe, because our dragomen had given the officers a liberal bakshish. The examination was short, and within half an hour after landing we were comfortably housed at the Jerusalem Hotel. I mention this hotel because it is kept by a man who was for a long time our American consular agent. His name is Harders, and he speaks his food with a religious doctrine of his own kind. The hotel rooms are not numbered 1, 2, 3, etc., but are named after the sons of Israel and the various Old Testament prophets, and each of them contains a book which Harders has written entitled "Bible Pills." It is composed of texts from the Scrip-

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tures fitted to one's daily life. The city of Jaffa has now about 50,000 inhabitants, of whom 36,000 are Mohammedans, 10,000 Christians and 5,000 Jews. It has a considerable trade, and is rapidly growing. The rich plains of Sharon at the back furnish wheat, grain and olive oil, while the highlands of Judea and Samaria produce wool to-day as they did in the times of our Saviour. All about the town are orange groves, the fruit of which is shipped to all parts of the Mediterranean. The oranges are almost the shape of a lemon, but they are of great size and sweet as honey. They are packed in boxes at the groves and are carried down to the harbor on the backs of camels. I met caravans of these huge beasts swaying along as they made their way to the steamers. More than 500 steamers and 1,000 sailing vessels call here every year.

In the House of Simon the Tanner. I was taken through the native quarters of Jaffa by a young Syrian named Moses. We went together through streets so narrow and winding that carriages could not enter them, and at times were altogether shaded by the houses, the roofs of which almost touched overhead. We entered several of the dwellings. Each consisted of but one room facing a common court, where the men, women and children were herded together. The house of Simon the tanner was destroyed some centuries ago, but another house, which is probably of the same character, stands on the same site. It is still done in the neighborhood. At least I judge as much by the smell. This house is now used as a second-class inn. It is a stone structure, built high up over the sea, with steps outside, which lead to the second story and roof. I climbed to the top, and there had about the same view as that of St. Peter at the time of his remarkable vision. In front of me the blue Mediterranean stretched out toward the horizon. At the north could be seen the sands reaching toward the ruins of Caesarea and the foothills of Mount Carmel, while at the south were those near which Askelon stood. It was here that St. Peter had that wonderful dream, in which all the beasts of the world were let down from heaven in a sheet, in order that he might eat of them. You remember that he refused, saying: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

And then came a voice, which said: "What God has cleansed that call not thou common."

It was these words that first led to the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, bringing about the conversion

of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and later on the preachings of Christ to all the world. As my guide refreshed my biblical memory with this story, he told me of an American who had visited the place with him last week. Said Moses: "This American was a funny man, and it seemed to me a foolish one. He was not satisfied with seeing this house, but he asked me to show him the vision that St. Peter saw, and demanded to know what had become of the sheet. He said he did not think he ought to pay me without I could show him the vision, but I told him that I could not do that without he had St. Peter's heart, and I was sure that he had not."

This American was probably facetious, but his questions are not unlike those of many of the tourists whose ignorance and superstition surpass belief. Many of them credit the stories of every guide and they go about kissing spots which they imagine to be hallowed by their connection with the Bible, but of whose authenticity no one knows.

At the Tomb of Dorcas. But there is one thing I must not forget about Jaffa. And that is that here was born the modern sewing box, and I might almost say the Woman's Missionary Society. You have all heard of Dorcas, the queen of the needle, who was raised from the dead by St. Peter. She was noted for the garments she had made for the poor, and at her funeral the people gathered round and showed specimens of her needlework, which she had sewed and hemmed and stitched for them.

This Dorcas lived two or three miles outside Jaffa on a hill, which has a commanding view of the country for miles around. It overlooks the sea and land, including thousands of acres of orange groves and gardens containing all kinds of fruits. The site of her house is now occupied by a Russian Greek Catholic Church and a tomb has been erected over her grave nearly 1,000 years ago. It was here that I drove out to the place, winding my way in and out through orange groves and up the hill to the church. Here I met a Russian priest, who was acquiring merit by guarding the bones of the saint in whose honor prayers are said daily. It was his wish that I visited the tomb. It is of stone and is roofed by a dome, the whole being covered with plaster. There is a door at the front, and by ascending several steps one can see the piece of mosaic which covers the spot where Dorcas lies. There are catacombs to the right and left containing the bones of saints, and over the whole are magnificent trees.

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